

Top-to-Toe Body Checks

Purpose

To safeguard children while respecting their privacy, dignity and rights. Top-to-toe checks are only undertaken where there is a clear safeguarding, welfare or medical reason.

When a Top-to-Toe Check May Be Carried Out

A top-to-toe check may be completed when:

- A child has had a significant accident or incident, and staff need to assess the extent of any injury.
- A child discloses that they have been hurt or abused.
- Staff observe injuries that suggest there may be additional injuries not immediately visible.
- There are safeguarding concerns that require further assessment in accordance with the setting's safeguarding procedures.
- Children's Social Care, the police, health professionals or another statutory agency have advised that such checks should be undertaken.
- There is a recurring pattern of unexplained injuries, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) decides that a more thorough assessment is necessary.

How the Check Will Be Conducted

- The child's welfare, dignity and privacy will always be respected.
- The check will be undertaken by two members of staff wherever possible, with at least one being the DSL or deputy DSL.
- The child will be spoken to, in an age-appropriate way, what is happening.
- Only the minimum level of clothing necessary will be moved to assess the concern. Children will never be unnecessarily undressed.
- Intimate areas will only be viewed where there is a specific safeguarding or medical reason and only where appropriate. Staff will not carry out intimate examinations.
- If immediate medical treatment is required, medical assistance will be sought without delay.

Recording

The following will be recorded on a top to toe form and stored as part of our safeguarding records:

- Date and time.
- Reason for the check – Welfare/Medical/Safeguarding concern
- Which two members of staff carried it out (DSL must be one of the members)
- A factual description of any injuries observed, including size, colour and location (using a body map where appropriate).
- The child's own words where relevant.
- Any explanation provided by the parent or child.
- Any action further action required.

Parents

Parents will normally be informed that a top-to-toe check has taken place. However, where informing a parent could place the child at increased risk of harm or compromise a safeguarding investigation, the advice of Children's Social Care or the police will be followed.

Routine Practice

Staff remain observant of children's wellbeing on arrival and throughout the day. Routine top-to-toe body checks of all children are **not undertaken** as standard practice. Visible injuries are recorded and managed in line with the setting's safeguarding and accident procedures.

This approach is proportionate and aligns with EYFS safeguarding principles, while providing staff with clear guidance on when a more detailed assessment is appropriate.